

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /011 R

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DRAFTED BY: S/S-O: NAGAO

APPROVED BY: S/S-O: WRIGHT

DESIRED DISTRIBUTION: S/S-O ONLY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 203697

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. STUDENT RIOTS PROVOKE THAI GOVERNMENT CRISIS

STUDENT RIOTS IN BANGKOK LED TO THE RESIGNATION OF PRIME MINISTER THANOM OCTOBER 14 AND HIS REPLACEMENT BY JUDGE SANYA THAMMASAK. ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT HAD EARLIER AGREED TO STUDENT DEMANDS FOR THE RELEASE OF ARRESTED STUDENTS AND THE PROMULGATION OF A NEW CONSTITUTION BY OCTOBER 1974, DISTURBANCES CONTINUED WITH CRITICISMS OF THE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH THE US AND FOR THE PRESENCE OF US AIRBASES IN THAILAND. IN A PUBLIC BROADCAST, KING PHUMIPHON ANNOUNCED MORE THAN 100 DEATHS HAD RESULTED FROM THE VIOLENCE. THE THAI GOVERNMENT HAS DEPLOYED SOLDIERS AND TANKS TO RESTORE ORDER. (CONFIDENTIAL) BANGKOK 16033, 16035, AND 16036, 10/14.

2. EARLY AUSTRALIAN ELECTIONS APPEAR LIKELY

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EMBASSY CANBERRA REPORTS THERE IS A REAL POSSIBILITY GENERAL ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN AUSTRALIA BEFORE CHRISTMAS OR IN THE SPRING OF 1974. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, INCLUDING INFLATION, A RASH OF STRIKES, THE MINERALS POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT, AND CONTROVERSY OVER REFERENDA ON PRICE AND INCOME CONTROLS, HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY DIMINISHED PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE LABOR PARTY. MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT LABOR WOULD LOSE IF ELECTIONS ARE HELD IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WITH THE LIBERAL-COUNTRY COALITION RETURNING TO POWER. (CONFIDENTIAL) CANBERRA 5652 AND 5655, 10/15.

3. THE PRICE OF WAR FOR ISRAEL

ISRAELI FINANCE MINISTER SAPIR HAS PUBLICLY ESTIMATED THE COST OF THE WAR SO FAR AT \$2 BILLION (APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF ISRAEL'S PROJECTED ANNUAL BUDGET). TO MEET THESE COSTS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED PLANS TO LEVY A COMPULSORY LOAN AND TO SOLICIT VOLUNTARY LOANS THROUGH INCREASED BOND SALES. EMBASSY TEL AVIV STATES THE RELATIVE RESTRAINT IN IMPOSING WAR TAXES IS PROBABLY DUE TO THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS AND HIGH EXPECTATIONS OF RAISING FUNDS ABROAD--DURING THE LAST WEEK ALONE, ISRAEL REPORTEDLY RAISED MORE THEN \$150 MILLION IN THE US AND CANADA. (CONFIDENTIAL) TEL AVIV 8077, 10/14. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, GOVERNMENT REFORM, WAR, POLITICAL STABILITY, ELECTION RESULTS, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: collinp0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE203697
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O: NAGAO
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS WRIGHT
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731032/aaaaaxcr.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: collinp0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16-Oct-2001 by kellew0>; APPROVED <22 FEB 2002 by collinp0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS
TAGS: PFOR, TH, AS, IS
To: JCS DOD
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005